

Trooper Kimberly Hurd

End of Watch: Thursday, July 16, 1992



Kimberly A. Hurd

Signs on I-95 honor Highway Patrol trooper killed in the line of duty **August 13, 2014 - Jessica Meszaros - Sun Sentinel**

DAVIE — A stretch of Interstate 95 — from Sample Road to the border of Broward and Palm Beach counties — is now named after a Florida Highway Patrol trooper who was killed by a drunken driver on the same highway where she made hundreds of DUI arrests.

The two new 8-foot signs will tell drivers that it's now called the "Trooper Kimberly Ann Hurd Memorial Highway."

Kimberly Hurd, Florida's first female trooper killed in the line of duty, served the agency for six years and made more than 400 DUI arrests in Broward from 1989 to 1992. Hurd arrested so many drunken driving suspects, she was known by her fellow troopers as the "Queen of DUIs."

"Her mission in life was to get DUIs off the road in Broward County," said Rich Rossman, who supervised Hurd for the Highway Patrol before her death.

The signs honoring Hurd were announced by the Highway Patrol at a press conference Wednesday. One sign was installed this week on I-95 at the Broward-Palm Beach County boundary line. The other sign soon will be placed on I-95 near the Sample Road exit.

Hurd was 26 years old when a van struck and killed her in 1992, while she was conducting a traffic stop on southbound I-95, north of Sample Road.

The driver, a former Ohio police officer who lived in Plantation, drove away from the crash site, but was followed by two witnesses who took down his license plate number. He later was sentenced to five years in prison and 10 years of probation in the DUI manslaughter.

Beverly Boltz, Hurd's mother, said her daughter loved her job.

"It was trooper or nothing," she said. "She wanted to be a trooper and she loved it. She got to do what she wanted to do."

Boltz described her daughter as a hard worker and jokester. "Our family was made up of five," she said. "One part is missing and it will always be missing."

Tribute held for FHP trooper killed by drunk driver August 13, 2014 - WSVN

A touching tribute to a South Florida Highway Patrol trooper who was killed in the line of duty on Interstate 95 by a drunk driver was held Wednesday.

The FHP unveiled a sign in honor of Kimberly Ann Hurd, a trooper who was killed 22 years ago in the line of duty. She had stopped a driver on I-95 in Pompano Beach when she was struck and killed by George Saffles, a drunk driver who fled the scene.

Hurd's family was moved by the dedication. "I want to say thank you. This means the world to us. Thank you," said Cheryl Boltz, the victim's sister.

Trooper Hurd had a nickname. She was referred to as the Queen of DUI because she wrote hundreds of them during her time as a trooper along the stretch of I-95 that extends from Sample Road to the Palm Beach County line, which has since been named in her honor.

Although she made it her mission to protect Florida drivers from drunk drivers, Hurd was killed by one. Her husband has not remarried since Hurd's passing, and he still gets emotional when he is asked about his wife. "In so many ways it's been a long time without her, but in some ways it seems like yesterday instead of being so long ago," said Timothy Hurd, the victim's husband, who is the police chief of the Kinsey, Alabama Police Department.

The sign will serve as a reminder to drivers of the sacrifice that Hurd, who was only 26 years old when she was killed, made for the public during her time as a trooper.

Hurd is remembered by devastated family members and coworkers. "Tell those closest to you how much you love them. Not later. Now, as later could be too late," said Boltz.

Driver Who Killed Trooper Gets Five Years March 27, 1993- Larry Keller - Sun-Sentinel

The penalty for a drunken driver for killing Florida Highway Patrol trooper Kimberly Hurd in a hit-and-run accident could be as little as five months.

The driver, George Saffles, was sentenced on Friday to five years in prison and 10 years of probation for slamming his 1987 maroon Chevrolet van into Hurd as she stood on the shoulder of Interstate 95 after making a traffic stop on the night of July 16.

Assistant State Attorney Howard Scheinberg said that because of prison crowding, Saffles could be free in as little as five months.

``It's possible,`` said state Department of Corrections spokeswoman Laura Levings.

Hurd was known as the ``Queen of the DUIs`` by fellow troopers. From 1989 until her death she made 409 drunken driving arrests. She was the first female state trooper to die in the line of duty.

“I had hoped for a stricter sentence, the maximum,” said Hurd’s mother, Beverly Boltz, who was in the packed Fort Lauderdale courtroom with her two other daughters.

“The probation, I think that’s fair, but not the prison time. Not for taking somebody’s life.”

Sentencing guidelines for Saffles, 51, a former Ohio police officer now living in Plantation, called for a sentence of 3 1/2 to 7 years. Scheinberg asked Broward Circuit Court Judge Robert Carney to impose a 10-year sentence.

Hurd’s death caused considerable outrage. Carney’s office received at least 80 letters -- 33 in one day alone -- in favor of a stiff sentence, said his judicial assistant, Pam Cahill.

Saffles’ wife and a co-worker at his construction job spoke on his behalf on Friday before sentencing.

“He made a mistake, and he’s sorry for it,” said Deana Saffles, his wife of 29 years. “He’s not a bad person. We thought we had our life together until this whole thing happened.”

Hurd’s mother, carrying a large, framed photograph of Hurd in her trooper’s uniform, and two sisters addressed the judge.

“When Kim was murdered, a part of me died with her,” said Beverly Boltz, her mother.

Said Connie Boltz: “If Kim were here today, I know what she’d say: ‘Don’t drink and drive. It kills.’”

Carney, addressing a courtroom crowded with Florida Highway Patrol troopers in uniform and family and friends of Hurd and Saffles, explained his rationale for the five-year sentence.

He said aggravating factors favoring a stiff sentence included that Saffles was trained and experienced in using a Breathalyzer as a police officer, was perhaps more aware than the average person of the effects of alcohol and, most of all, drove away. But Carney also said Saffles had no prior criminal record, had reached the rank of captain as a police officer and had otherwise led a productive life.

Some people had suggested that Hurd’s accomplishments and the fact that she was a law enforcement officer should be considered when he imposed sentence, Carney said.

But Carney said, “Every victim should be entitled to enjoy the same consideration without fear that the court will weigh one victim’s case more heavily than another.”

Saffles pleaded guilty last month to driving under the influence, DUI/ manslaughter, vehicular homicide, leaving the scene of an accident with a death and a misdemeanor count of causing property damage.

A condition of the plea was that if Carney exceeded the maximum seven-year sentence suggested by state guidelines, Saffles could withdraw his plea.

In addition to prison time and probation, Carney also suspended Saffles’ driver’s license for 10 years, ordered him to perform 50 hours of community service and to pay \$8,838 to Hurd’s husband, Timothy Hurd, and \$500 to the owner of a car he damaged in the accident.

Saffles can apply to the state Department of Motor Vehicles for a restricted driver’s license in two years, said his attorney, Arnie Gruskin.

Hurd, who worked out of the Highway Patrol's Fort Lauderdale office, was hit as she stood on the shoulder of I-95 in north Broward while questioning the driver of a truck with no rear bumper. The impact hurled her body about 84 feet.

Saffles continued south and drove home. A woman and her daughter followed the van and wrote down the tag number. Saffles was arrested in less than an hour at his Plantation home.

An hour later, Saffles was taken to a hospital where he had a .13 blood alcohol reading. A reading of .10 or higher is the legal standard in drunken driving cases in Florida.

Hurd was one of seven hit-and-run fatalities in Broward in three months last year.

On Tuesday, Kenneth Pierce of Davie was convicted of vehicular homicide in another of those cases -- the June 23 hit-and-run death of Nicole Rae Walker, 6, in Dania. He is awaiting sentencing.

Florida Highway Patrol Capt. Rich Rossman said Hurd's death ought to teach drunken drivers a lesson.

"I just wish every drinking driver could have been in court today," Rossman said. "Both families are ruined. Why? Because somebody decided to drink and drive."

Man Changes Plea, Admits Dui Manslaughter State Trooper On I-95 Shoulder Killed In Hit-run February 3, 1993- Trevor Jensen - Sun-Sentinel

Former police officer George Saffles admitted Tuesday he ran over and killed Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Kimberly Hurd as he was driving drunk on Interstate 95.

Saffles, 51, pleaded guilty to drunken driving and DUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of an accident with death.

Hurd's husband, Tim, said he appreciated Saffles' decision to change his earlier plea of not guilty.

"It's a measure of a man to admit when you're guilty," said Hurd, a former Lighthouse Point police officer who soon will join the Broward Sheriff's Office. "He saved us the pain of going through a trial."

Saffles, of Plantation, faces as long as 12 years in prison, Assistant State Attorney Howard Scheinberg said. However, the recommended sentence for Saffles' offenses is three to seven years.

Broward Circuit Judge Robert Carney said he will allow Saffles to withdraw his plea if he decides on a sentence of more than seven years. Sentencing is set for March 26.

Saffles, a former police officer in Ohio and Tennessee who is now a bulldozer operator, stared straight ahead and said nothing as he left the Fort Lauderdale courtroom.

Kimberly Hurd, 26, was killed on July 16 when she was hit by a van that veered onto the shoulder of I-95 and struck her as she talked to the driver of a truck she had stopped for having no bumper.

The van continued south but a mother and daughter on I-95 followed it and got a tag number. Police arrested Saffles at his home within an hour.

Hurd was known as the Queen of DUIs, making 400 drunken-driving arrests between 1989 and her death.

Highway Patrol Capt. Richard Rossman, who attended Tuesday's hearing, said his only recommendation on sentencing Saffles will be to make sure there is a strict probationary period beyond any prison time.

"He could be out in a year or two, if he gets one of the minimums," Rossman said. "I think he should remain under some sort of control."

Rossman said he does not think that Saffles should get a stiffer sentence because he killed a police officer.

Tim Hurd, who married Kimberly Hurd a few months before she was killed, said he will be satisfied with a sentence within the three- to seven-year state sentencing guidelines.

Hit-run Reward Presented September 1, 1992 - Sun-Sentinel

A mother and her daughter were given a \$1,000 reward on Monday for their part in the capture of a suspect in the hit and run death of Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Kimberly Hurd in July.

Evonne Sass of Fort Lauderdale and daughter Page Dubinsky, 18, of California, received the award at the monthly meeting of the Crime Stoppers board, said Highway Patrol Capt. Rich Rossman.

"They did the right thing. They took down his license number, then followed the guy and didn't interfere. They gave us the information and that led to the quick arrest," Rossman said.

Within hours, troopers charged George Saffles, 52, of Plantation, with DUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of a traffic fatality in the July 17 death of Hurd, who was struck from behind and killed after stopping a vehicle on Interstate 95 near Sample Road.

Officers Pay Respects To Fallen Trooper Mourners Told To Honor Colleague's Gift Of Service July 21, 1992 - Kevin Davis - Sun-Sentinel

More than 1,000 law enforcement officers paid their last respects on Monday to Florida Highway Patrol Trooper Kimberly Hurd, who was killed in a hit-and-run accident on Interstate 95 last week.

Police officers stood at attention in line outside St. Thomas More Catholic Church in Boynton Beach and saluted as Hurd's flag-draped casket was carried by fellow troopers into the church, which was packed to its capacity of 1,250 people.

Only months ago, she married Timothy Hurd of Tamarac in the same church.

Pastor Louis Guerin told mourners to remember Hurd, 26, for "her tremendous gift of service" and dedication to her job. "She put her life on the line," he said.

Hurd, known for her crusade to rid the highways of drunken drivers, was killed by a man thought to have been drinking, police said.

Guerin asked that all law enforcement officers help Hurd's family in their time of grief.

"Share with them your love, your dedication," he said.

And for Kimberly Hurd: ``Ask God to reward her for all the good she has done.``

The procession from the church was led by more than 50 motorcycle officers. The caravan stretched for miles and stopped traffic for as long as 30 minutes at some intersections.

Tow truck operators also joined the procession, which went north on Military Trail, west on Boynton Beach Boulevard, north on Jog Road and west on Southern Boulevard to Our Lady Queen of Heaven Cemetery, where Hurd was buried.

At the grave site, family and close friends gathered under a canopy to shield them from the hot sun, which burned most of the morning and early afternoon. Her husband was joined by Hurd's parents, Charles and Beverly Boltz, and sisters Connie and Cheryl.

Two Highway Patrol planes flew overhead, followed by six helicopters, with one breaking away to symbolize Hurd's passing. An honor guard fired three rifle salutes, and another officer played Taps.

The American flag draping Hurd's casket was presented to her husband.

At 1:42 p.m. a radio dispatcher announced that Trooper Kimberly Hurd was 10-7, police code for out of service.

Trooper Jimmie Collins, who had worked with Hurd since she began about six years ago, drove her squad car to the funeral.

Collins, who stood by Hurd's car as the announcement came over, wept as he heard his friend's name broadcast over the radio for the last time.

``She was like a sister to me,`` Collins said. ``She was the best at what she did. She lived and died DUIs.``

Collins said Hurd should be remembered as ``a happy person. Always happy, always helpful, a dedicated person.``

``It really hurts when it's one of your own,`` said Lt. Mike Matz, who worked with Hurd at the Fort Lauderdale station.

Matz was in Orlando when Hurd was killed and read a brief item in the newspaper that a trooper had been killed in Fort Lauderdale.

``I called in and they told me it was her,`` Matz said. ``I couldn't believe it.``

Hurd was killed late Thursday when a van veered off the road and struck her while she was on a traffic stop on I-95 near Southwest 48th Street.

A woman and her daughter followed the van and wrote down the tag number to help police track the driver, identified as George Saffles, 51, of Plantation.

Saffles, a former police officer in Cleveland, was charged with DUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of an accident with a fatality.

Slain Trooper Fought DUI Police: Hit-run Driver Drinking July 18, 1992 - Kevin Davis - Sun-Sentinel

Trooper Kimberly Hurd dedicated her life to keeping drunks off the roads.

And then a drunken driver killed her.

Hurd, 26, who made 409 drunken driving arrests for the Florida Highway Patrol since 1989 and taught recruits how to conduct DUI investigations, was killed by a hit-and-run driver on Interstate 95 on Thursday night.

“All indications are that this person was under the influence of alcohol,” patrol Lt. Jim Howell said.

“It’s tragic and ironic that this could be the cause of her demise,” Capt. Rich Rossman said. “She had waged her own war against DUI in Broward County.”

Said friend and colleague Trooper Mike Cendan: “She just wanted to save people’s lives. She wanted to put these kinds of people away before they hurt somebody.”

About an hour after Hurd was killed, the Highway Patrol arrested George Saffles, 51, at his home in the 1100 block of Northwest 79th Drive in Plantation. He was charged with DUI manslaughter, vehicular homicide and leaving the scene of an accident involving a fatality.

Saffles, a former Cleveland police officer, was being held without bail at the Broward County Jail.

“He was emotionally devastated. He was shaken to his very core,” said Broward Assistant Public Defender Howard Finkelstein, who represented Saffles in court on Friday. “Here was a man who was a police officer for 20 years and now he finds himself in jail charged with killing one of his own.”

An unidentified woman and her daughter helped police track down Saffles. They saw a van hit something on the roadside and followed the van for about four miles, writing down its tag number and pulling up alongside to get a good look at the driver’s face.

They used a cellular phone to relay their description to police.

The Highway Patrol withheld the names of the witnesses, citing the ongoing investigation.

News of Hurd’s death hit hard at the Highway Patrol station in Fort Lauderdale, where Hurd was one of 61 troopers assigned to Broward County. By midmorning, many of her colleagues were still at the station after having stayed up all night.

“She was an outstanding person, an outstanding worker,” a tired and shaken Rossman said. “She was truly dedicated to her job.”

Cendan, who served on the department’s special response team with Hurd, said, “We want to remember her the way we saw her two weeks ago, laughing and smiling.”

Hurd’s personnel file was loaded with commendations for her crusade against drunken drivers in her six years with the Highway Patrol.

In 1991 she was commended for making 107 DUI arrests. Maj. William Driggers wrote, ``If every trooper and police officer in the state had your initiative in DUI enforcement, this would be a much safer state in which to live and drive.``

Raag Singhal, an assistant Broward state attorney who has prosecuted many of Hurd's cases, said he was shocked at the irony of her death at the hands of a suspected drunken driver.

``I couldn't believe it,`` Singhal said. ``She was an excellent trooper. She was always willing to come into court and help us out. The real thing about her was that she loved her job.``

Hurd started her shift at 10 p.m. Thursday. She was scheduled to work until 6 a.m. Friday.

At 10:33 p.m. Hurd pulled over Jose Larramendi of Miramar in the southbound lane of I-95 near Southwest 48th Street to question him about a bumper missing from his yellow Nissan truck. Both vehicles were 3 1/2 to 4 feet off the road. Hurd was standing on the driver's side speaking to Larramendi, who had opened his door.

The van struck Hurd and slammed the truck's door shut. Hurd was flung into the air and about 100 feet from the truck.

Larramendi, who was not hurt, ran to her and checked her pulse. Not feeling one, he ran to her squad car, grabbed the two-way radio and yelled for help.

``I can't get over it,`` Larramendi said. ``It happened so fast. I panicked. I freaked out. ... I'm lucky I didn't get out there. It could have been me too.``

When Saffles was arrested, he said ``I hit her,`` but later he said he thought he had hit a barricade, Howell said.

``Sometimes good people find themselves in bad situations,`` Finkelstein said. ``These are tragedies for the people who die and tragedies for the people who are charged with committing the crime.``

Hurd's death was a reminder to other officers that their lives are always on the line.

``All of us know that every traffic stop we make could be the last one we make,`` Sgt. John Baker said. ``There are just some things you can't guard against.``

Hurd, who was recently married, is survived by her husband, Timothy Hurd; her parents, Charles and Beverly Boltz; and sisters Connie and Cheryl Boltz of Palm Beach County.

A viewing has been scheduled at Fred Hunter's Funeral Home, 2401 S. University Drive, Davie, from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m. Sunday. Services are scheduled for 11 a.m. Monday at St. Thomas More Parish, 10935 S. Military Trail, Boynton Beach. Burial will be in Our Lady Queen of Peace Cemetery in West Palm Beach.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Mothers Against Drunk Driving.